GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
COAL
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2957
ANSWERED ON:11.03.2003
STRIKE BY SINGARENI COLLIERY WORKERS
RENUKA CHOWDHURY

Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state:

(a). whether Public Sector Trade Unions in the country observed February 13, 2003 as a Day of Solidaritywith the Singareni Coal workers of Andhra Pradesh, and went on a general strike on that day, in support of their protest against privatization and contracturalisation of jobs of permanent nature;

(b). if so, the precise demands of the Singareni Colliery workers;

(c). the reaction of the Union Government thereto;

(d). whether the Union Government have constituted a Crisis Resolution Group;

(e). if so, the terms of reference of the said group; and

(f). the steps taken to meet the coal shortage and safeguard, the interests of the workers?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF COAL (SHRI KARIYA MUNDA)

(a): As reported by the Coal India Limitedand Neyveli Lignite Corporation Limited under the administrative control ofthis Ministry, no strike was observed in their respective jurisdictions on 13-2-2003 in support of strike in Singareni Collieries Company Limited.

(b): The main demands made by the workers were as under:

i) No privatization and contractisation in SCCL.

ii) Stop contractisation in Koyagudem Opencast Project and immediate withdrawal of Surface Miner.

iii) Roll back of various privatization measures introduced in the past such as hiring of private ambulances, security services, private vehicle etc.

iv) Revival of company's voluntary Retirement Scheme for providing dependant employment (which is known as Hereditary Employment Scheme).

v) Company should continued to provide power to all hutment areas.

(c): The management of SCCL has takenall steps to apprise the workmen by way of pamphlets, wall posters, advertisements, electronic media etc. of the factual position on the demands raised in their strike notice. The management as well as Andhra Pradesh Government had also written letters to the union leaders explaining the position. It was communicated to the workmen that SCCL has not transferred its business, ownership and title or assets to any private agency. Only certain non-core activities are being out sourced/off-loaded in a phased manner within the provisions of the Contract Labour (Regulation& Abolition) Act,1970. It was also conveyed r>that there is no retrenchment or compulsory retirement of any employees in SCCL.

(d) & (e) : During the strike period, an inter- Ministerial Crisis Resolution Group (CRG)consisting of representatives of the Ministries of Power, Railways, Central Electricity Authority (CEA),Coal India Limited (CIL)and Singareni Collieries Company Limited (SCCL) was meeting every week under the Chairmanship of Special Secretary(Coal) to monitor the situation and ensure that there were no forced outages.

(f): During the strike period following steps were taken by SCCL to run the mines effectively :-

(a) The co-operation of loyal workman, all officers and Police Department was sought.

(b) Coal dispatches were made at an average of 64,000 tonnes per day.

(c) Sufficient coal supplies and stocks were maintained for linked power houses.

(d) Upon a request from SCCL management to Ministry of Coal, coal supplies from Coal India Limited were diverted to some of the power houses linked to SCCL.